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DE RUEHJA #1706/01 2540035  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
R 100035Z SEP 08  
FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC 0032  
INFO RHMFIUU/DEPT OF HOMELAND SECURITY WASHINGTON DC  
RUEHJS/AMCONSUL SURABAYA 2270  
RUEHJA/AMCONSUL MEDAN

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 03 JAKARTA 001706

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR CA/FPP, CA/EX, CA/VO/F/P, EAP/MTS

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [CVIS](#) [CMGT](#) [KFRD](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: Jakarta F1 Visa Validation Study

REF: Jakarta 1192

11. SUMMARY: The Consular Section of US Embassy Jakarta recently conducted a student visa validation study. The study covered F1 visa issuances for the six-month period December 1, 2006, to May 31, 2007, and was based on queries of Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS) status within the Consolidated Consular Database (CCD) followed by queries of the Department of Homeland SecurityQs (DHS) Arrival-Departure Information System (ADIS). The overstay rate was 4 percent. However, an additional 13 percent of students adjusted status within 6 months of their arrival to the U.S., raising concerns about the legitimacy of their student intent.

The study found that many applicants who attended one English Language School violated U.S. immigration laws. The data show a significant decrease in the overstay rate and number of suspect students during the last month of the study period, which was the first month of significantly tightened adjudication standards for English language school students. This reduced overstay rate and reduced rate of quick adjustments of status in May 2007 mirrors a similar trend revealed in the B1/B2 study of the same period (reftel). END SUMMARY.

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Methodology  
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12. The study was restricted to F1 visa issuances to Indonesian applicants. The sample was selected from issuances during the six-month period December 1, 2006, to May 31, 2007, the same study period as a recent B1/B2 validation study (reftel).

13. In the study period, 753 F1 visas were issued. The random sample selection was done in accordance with instructions in the Consular Affairs/Fraud Prevention Program (CA/FPP) document "How to use the CCD reports and Excel Spreadsheet to generate random samples of visa applicants for use in a validation study". The number sampled (567 applicants) was based upon a statistical formula for calculating sample sizes. The sample number provides a standard +/- 2.1 interval for an overstay rate of 10 percent as suggested by FPP.

14. Conoff used the Consolidated Consular Database (CCD) to check the Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SEVIS) status of all the students in the sample. If the student was in "Active" or "Initial" status, the student was assumed to be enrolled in a valid program or in the process of transferring from one valid program to another. If the student was in any other SEVIS status, Post looked them up in the Department of Homeland SecurityQs (DHS) Arrival-Departure Information System (ADIS) to help determine if the applicant never travelled, returned to Indonesia, or was still in the U.S.:

-- A SEVIS status of "Cancelled" means the applicant failed to register, and Conoff tried to confirm that the student never travelled;

-- A SEVIS status of "Terminated" means the academic program was not completed, and Conoff tried to confirm that the student went to the

U.S. and returned to Indonesia;

-- If the SEVIS status was "Completed", Conoff tried to confirm the student returned to Indonesia or transferred (sometimes with a different SEVIS ID) to another academic program;

-- A SEVIS status of "Deactivated" means the student should have another SEVIS record at a different institution, which Conoff tried to confirm.

¶5. By comparing the SEVIS history and the dates of SEVIS status changes with the student's travel history in ADIS, Conoff could make a reasonable assessment of the student's present status. In many cases ADIS also reports if the traveler adjusted status to become an immigrant or claim asylum. If the student entered the U.S., and ADIS reported that the individual adjusted status, and the student was not active in SEVIS for 6 months after entry, then for purposes of this study the traveler was counted as a "quick adjustment of status." (Note: Six-month cutoff was chosen arbitrarily. End Note.) Student adjustments of status are common and not inherently problematic, but if a student applicant arrived in the US and applied to be an immigrant within 6 months of entry and did not maintain their student status, they likely misrepresented themselves as students at the time of the visa interview. Though not technically overstays, since they are in legal status, these applicants are problematic, since they appear to have abused the student visa process.

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Findings  
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¶6. Table of findings:

SEVIS Status

Active: 359 (63.3%)  
Cancelled: 38 (6.7%)  
Terminated: 88 (15.5%)  
Initial: 27 (4.8%)  
Completed: 54 (9.5%)  
Deactivated: 1 (0.2%)

Total: 567 (100%)

Presumed Status Based on Analysis

Active Students: 390 (69%)  
Returned: 59 (10%)  
Never travelled: 6 (1%)  
Adjusted status after more than 6 months: 28 (5%)  
Adjusted status within 6 months of arriving: 60 (11%)  
Likely overstay: 24 (4%)

¶7. Breakdown of Problematic Students:

Sum of Overstay Percentage and Adjusted Status within 6 months of arrival (AOS-quick) Percentage:

December 2006 Q- 6% (overstay) + 7% (AOS-quick) = 13%  
January 2007 -- 6% (overstay) + 8% (AOS-quick) = 14%  
February 2007 -Q 3% (overstay) + 17% (AOS-quick) = 20%  
March 2007 -- 7% (overstay) + 13% (AOS-quick) = 20%  
April 2007 -- 2% (overstay) + 29% (AOS-quick) = 31%  
May 2007 -- 0% (overstay) + 4% (AOS-quick) = 4%

Average Age (yrs): 23.71

Gender: Male 47% Female 53%

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Analysis  
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¶8. Though the presumed overstay rate was only 4 percent, the total number of students who adjusted status was 17 percent. Student adjustments of status are legal and not uncommon, especially after

years in the U.S. as a student (e.g., adjustment to H1B worker status after graduation and practical training). However, the majority of students (13 percent of total) who arrived in the U.S. and adjusted status did so within 6 months of arriving, while the remaining 4 percent adjusted to immigrant status after a longer period of time in the U.S.

¶9. During the study period, various visa brokers were facilitating Indonesians posing as students to enter the U.S. Other applicants may have taken similar malafide approaches independently. Considering the 85 cumulative overstays and quick adjustments of immigrant status (cumulative questionable students), 21 students (25 percent) registered at various "ELS Language Centers" around the country, and 10 students (12 percent) went to Concord English Language Center (ELC) -- a combined 37 percent of the cumulative questionable students registered with these two English language programs.

¶10. FPP notified posts early in 2008 that the Concord ELC Program was a front to facilitate foreign nationals coming to the U.S. to work illegally. Jakarta FPU had also been investigating fraudulent cases related to Concord and other language schools for months before. In April 2008, DHS shut down the Concord English Language Center. ELS Programs and Concord ELC aside, the schools with the highest cumulative questionable students were Arizona State (6 students), Cal State Chico (5 students), and Cal State Fullerton and Longbeach (4 students each).

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Conclusion  
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¶11. This is the first documented F1 validation study at Post. The percentage of students in active SEVIS status was lower than expected Q 67 percent. However, an average of 77 percent of students issued visas during the study period are either still in school or returned to Indonesia. In May 2007, this percentage was much higher at 94 percent. This is likely due to tightened adjudicating standards, a reduction in issuances to English language students, and the early summer influx of students applying to attend community colleges, associate degree programs, and 4-year college programs.

¶12. COMMENT: Post recognizes that this validation study methodology has weaknesses, but given the available data, it is a useful indicator of student visa trends. Post access to ADIS proved an invaluable resource in determining the travel history of applicants.

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Post acknowledges that ADIS is far from completely accurate, but coupled with SEVIS and the CCD, the resource helped indicate when students arrived, when and if they left, and if they adjusted status. Consular management has discussed the findings with the adjudicating consular officers to improve interviewing and adjudicating skills. END COMMENT.

HUME